

A/1

Reasonable Doubt

Chapter X: New Orleans, USA

Part I. Camelot and the New Frontier

The dawn of the Sixties was accompanied by two powerful forces that surged through America, pulling and grinding at each other with a passion that can be seen much more clearly a quarter century later. One force was highly visible, the other not so clearly perceived but every bit as potent.

On the one hand, there was a palpable exuberance of that slim majority of American voters who had elected John F. Kennedy. They applauded his promises of a bold and unprecedented new direction for the country and the world. They believed that President Kennedy's vibrant espousal of new ideas would make the world community a better place for everyone—including for the first time in history multitudes of hungry, ignorant and sick. His election was seen as a signal that the compassion and material wealth of all Americans would be ^{even more benevolently,} shared with those less fortunate both here and abroad. And there was the fervent belief that this new dimension would foster peace and justice and equality around the world. For the Kennedy faithful, the line between illu-

X/3

viewed alongside the rich texture of the enthusiasm surrounding the new President. The very eagerness of Kennedy's supporters nourished the feeling that Kennedy's accomplishments would take a terrible toll from those ^{certain} constituencies which were in fundamental opposition to all he stood for. To those, there was a threatening ring in the exhortation of the privileged young President that people should ask what they could do for their country. Many believed that they already did the maximum for their country, since it unhesitatingly helped itself and others to their wealth.

In an odd way, the enthusiasm for the newly inaugurated President was so ostentatious that it dominated the news here and abroad as if he had a mandate, ignoring completely the fact he had barely squeaked in. Thus, the depth and breadth of his opposition was largely overlooked. One gnawing, ironic point shared by much of the opposition held that John Kennedy was, in fundamental ways, a product of the very forces that now opposed him--and that he, ^{on many occasions,} ~~in turn,~~ made political capital of opposing them. The diversity and feral intensity of the ^{violent,} ^{to Kennedy} opposition blazed clear at Dealey Plaza, ^{more} ~~as~~ powerful in its destructiveness ^{than} ~~as~~ the Kennedy supporters were in their exuberant optimism. While ^{his} ~~these~~ partisans saw in their President the dawn of a new age for America, the ^{violent} ~~opposition~~ saw it, too. The question is whether they determined that it was not to be.

A/2 In addition to the unsuspected virulence of Kennedy's

x/5

Why not identify - and limit to - CIA.
It was not the Army, Navy, etc

U.S. Government--presumably with the sanction of President Kennedy--were repeatedly trying to assassinate him. Castro ultimately claimed there were twenty-four U.S. attempts to murder him. In subsequent years a Congressional committee officially confirmed at least eight U.S. attempts to assassinate the Cuban Premier.

CIA?

In its persistent efforts to murder Castro, the United States reached beyond its routine arsenal of military and intelligence resources. It is now officially conceded that the CIA recruited certain high-level figures from organized crime to carry out murder plots against Castro. As freakish as this collusion appears, both sides had important reasons for wanting to murder the Cuban leader. Not only had he established a hostile Communist government at the edge of the United States, but he had also closed down the ^{narcotics,} gambling and prostitution operations run so lucratively by the U.S. mob. ^{Perhaps it should not be too} ~~Thus, it is not~~ surprising that these unlikely conspirators had joined forces.

There was an added reason for the mob's willingness to participate in the assassination plots--their desire to turn down the heat from the Justice Department. From the earliest days of the Kennedy administration, ^{the Justice Department,} ~~under the direction of~~ Attorney General Robert Kennedy, ~~the Justice Department had~~ exhibited an unparalleled commitment to fight organized crime in the United States. It was a commitment with the full blessing of the President. This commitment particularly puzzled mob bosses as they felt they had virtually delivered

not Daley?

financial, business and industrial also

X/7

several darkly potent groups:

- ◆Anti-Castro exiles.
- ◆Pro-Castro elements, including ^{perhaps} Premier Castro himself.
- ◆Organized crime.
- ◆Powerful oil interests.
- ◆Right-wing and racist domestic factions.
- ◆Elements of U.S. military and intelligence, enraged over Kennedy's denunciation of their efforts following the Bay of Pigs disaster.

Such forces possessed in abundance the classic ingredients for murder--motive, means, and opportunity. In fact, with such a rare confluence of threatening elements, a great range of shifting opportunities for assassination presented itself as the President, with increasing frequency during 1963, moved about the country on political trips. In retrospect, ^{the possibility of a successful assassination seemed immense.} ~~one success of an assassination seemed inescapable.~~

(One-line Space)

No place in America had a greater concentration of these diverse factions than steamy, seething New Orleans. As a whole, that city had ⁵traditionally tolerated, even welcomed, a tantalizing variety of races and creeds as well as political and social beliefs. If the city itself took delight in its natural diversities, it had reason for special

celebration during the tumultuous years of the early Sixties. This ~~breed~~ potpourri of diversity--and, by some lights, perversity--had fostered an atmosphere in which almost any extreme--whether it be political, philosophical, sexual, artistic, religious or even criminal--was remarkably at ease. The climate of laissez-faire was virtually absolute.

Beginning ^{before} From the earliest days of Castro's power, the city was a ^{major} ~~leading~~ haven for displaced Cubans of all social and economic stripes. Included in the massive influx of hot-headed exiles were ^{many} ~~these equally angry~~ professionals, ⁽¹⁻⁻¹⁾ including doctors, and lawyers and bankers. Given this strident Cuban population, it is not surprising that New Orleans

became a hub of the efforts by the United States Government to stage either the overthrow of Fidel Castro--or his assassination. Toward these ends, there was an extensive presence of U.S. military and intelligence advisors working in and around the city.

As the major city in one of the largest oil-producing states in the country, New Orleans--and much of Louisiana--was strongly influenced by the attitudes of the powerful companies and men who controlled these vast oil interests. Moreover, as a major city of the Deep South, New Orleans only superficially--thanks to its cosmopolitan, Bohemian complexion--escaped the racism and attendant hatred that was so virulent in the South during the early Sixties. Even the most prominent of the city's raucous Mardi Gras fêtes systematically excluded Negroes and Jews. Beneath a surface of

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Castro

X/9

tolerance, there churned ^{in residents} many of the same racial passions that infected so much of the rest of America.

A/4 One of the most important factors in any consideration of New Orleans is the powerful presence of Carlos Marcello, the kingpin of organized crime in the Southeastern United States. Marcello's ubiquitous business interests were intertwined with many aspects of the city's economy--including

bars, restaurants, prostitution, transportation and tourism.

(He admitted only to being a furniture salesman.)

Hundreds of New Orleanians worked for him either directly or

indirectly, and even the legitimate business people granted

him a certain respect for the power that he represented. A

convincing case can be made that for most of the decades of

Marcello's power, local law enforcement officials ^{and near} in New

Orleans have never taken punitive aim at his wide opera-

tions. What legal difficulty Marcello has experienced has

come from federal authorities, ^{beginning with} particularly the Kennedy

Justice Department. ^{Administration. IHS, in sympathy, was first.}

^{Another}

In addition to this volatile mix, ^{was that} New Orleans produced

the man the government insisted was the lone assassin of

President Kennedy in Dallas--Lee Harvey Oswald. Not only was

Oswald born in New Orleans, he ~~had~~ lived there for six

months during 1963. ^{in New Orleans} During the months preceding the assassi-

nation, ^{in New Orleans} Oswald was associated in varying and confusing ways

with elements that would ostensibly benefit from President

Kennedy's death. The public's ever-increasing skepticism

about the Warren Commission's ^(indictment of Oswald) ~~conclusion~~ served not to

Based
outside
H.O. 11
Jefferson Park

X/10

settle the situation but to stir ~~up~~ these bizarre elements ^{into} ~~like~~ a witch's brew.

It is no shock that a setting so flamboyant and tawdry as New Orleans should produce the only prosecution in which a man was brought to trial for conspiring to assassinate John F. Kennedy. The prosecution ultimately failed, but questions were raised in a national forum and evidence ^{would} ~~presented~~ that leave ^{one} ~~almost any observer~~ certain that something connected to the assassination was going on in New Orleans. Just what is as confusing a mystery as ever.

I do not believe that any such evidence was "presented" in the trial and Garrison did not do it in any other way. He just improvised theories

exaggeration. He was not part of organized crime

X/13

comments of Oswald's killer Jack Ruby, whose organized crime ties are solidly established. In Contract on America, ~~perhaps~~ ^{one of} the best analyses published on evidence of organized crime participation in the JFK killing, Author David E. Scheim points out:

who by his
own book
has
written
with
Marcello

"Although Garrison made extravagant charges against an assortment of Cuban exiles, CIA agents, Minutemen, White Russians and Nazis, he conspicuously avoided any reference to one prime assassination suspect: the Mafia....(I) am discussing testimony concerning Ruby's anti-Castro activities, ...Garrison described Ruby as a 'CIA Bagman' and an 'employee of the CIA.' But Garrison said nothing about Ruby's organized crime involvement."

~~Marcello~~

Such myopia about the Mafia must inevitably raise questions about Garrison's entire motivation. ~~There~~ There are numerous examples of Garrison and his henchmen having profitable associations with mobster Carlos Marcello, and certainly Marcello has enjoyed relative peace from the authorities in his fiefdom of New Orleans. Citing this "coziness with the Marcello organization," David Scheim writes:

is simply
a not
unreasonable

"...(I)t is logical to ask whether (Garrison's) probe was carried out with precisely (the) purpose of...of deflect(ing) attention from Carlos Marcello."

Aaron Kohn, who for many years was the managing director of the respected private group called the Metropolitan Crime Commission of New Orleans, captured the more common perception

X/16

reporter.

after a hearing caused by

I believe the arrest
was a year earlier

Along with his other attributes, Ferrie was widely considered a brilliant pilot of various sorts of aircraft. Many believe that he served as a CIA contract agent during the height of the Cuban exile activities. Until March of 1963 Ferrie was employed as a commercial pilot for Eastern Airlines. He was dismissed from Eastern following publicity over his arrest for sodomizing a minor boy. Following this, Ferrie worked primarily as a private pilot and as an investigator. On the day of the assassination, he was supposedly in a federal courtroom in New Orleans with none other than mob boss Carlos Marcello, whose lawyer retained Ferrie as an investigator.

5?

Ferrie told the newspaper that Garrison seemed to believe that his role in the JFK conspiracy was to be on hand to fly the Dallas assassins to safety outside the country. Ferrie's seemingly iron-clad alibi did not deter Garrison who, it would turn out, was concentrating his case on the act of conspiracy to assassinate rather than actual participation in the murder. Ferrie's comments were the first substantive hint of what Garrison was up to. ~~Investigation showed that back in 1963, hint of what Garrison was up to.~~

h W.C.
records

Investigation showed that within 72 hours of the assassination, Garrison had arrested Ferrie and two friends and turned them over to the ^{Secret Service and} FBI--which interviewed them and let them go, a fact duly reflected in the Warren Commission records. Now,

X/18

that David Ferrie was "one of history's most important individuals." Among the ^{Revelation} ~~bizarre~~ contents of Ferrie's home were three blank U.S. passports--seeming to need only photographs and biographical information to appear valid. There also was a one-hundred pound bomb and numerous guns and military equipment.

or bomb
shell?

In Washington, there was a clear measure of official concern over Garrison's activities. President Johnson telephoned Acting Attorney-General Ramsey Clark to inform him of Ferrie's death. Years later an FBI report was disclosed that noted that President Johnson was "very concerned about this matter" and wanted full details about Ferrie's death.

A few days later, when ^{District Attorney} Garrison assured reporters that he had "solved" the assassination, he added:

"We're working out details of evidence which will probably take months. We know that we are going to be able to arrest every person involved--at least every person who is still living. The key to the whole case is through the looking glass. Black is white and white is black. I don't want to be cryptic, but that's the way it is."

also in Wm & Wm

These comments were cryptic indeed ~~a far cry from what they meant.~~ (But by this point Garrison had a hammerlock on the attention of the Western world. Millions of people eagerly awaited the next development, the next pronouncement from Garrison. The wait was not long.

On March 1st, the same day that David Ferrie was buried,

Factually incorrect. He had nothing to do with the disclosure & may have been embarrassed by it. An alert reporter checked the return on the x/19 search warrant that had been issued.

Jim Garrison announced the arrest of Clay L. Shaw, a prominent New Orleans business and social figure. Only eighteen months earlier, the City of New Orleans had bestowed upon Shaw its highest honor, a medal for the International Order of Merit. At the time of Shaw's arrest, Garrison may have been short on evidence linking Shaw to the assassination, but he made certain the world was informed about some of the strange items his office turned up in Shaw's home--^{including} one chain, five whips, one black hood and cap, and one black gown.

garrison People were outraged at this apparent invasion of Shaw's privacy. His friends--and they were numerous and prominent--insisted that the kinky paraphernalia was part of a Mardi Gras costume. Others charged that this was a move on Garrison's part to somehow introduce Shaw's discreet homosexuality into the developing case. Whatever else Jim Garrison's capricious arrest of Shaw accomplished, it earned for him widespread scorn about his motives and called into question the legitimacy of his whole prosecution. TPWR:A At the same time, many observers believed that the fact Garrison, a man with high political ambitions, would go so far was a solid indication of the strength of the evidence he would present.

The immediate result of Shaw's arrest was frenzied publicity. More than ever, the world's appetite was whetted for the next step--the presentation of evidence and the trial of Shaw and his yet unarrested co-conspirators. Garrison loved

Not really "out of the blue" but in response to a reporter's question
And as I recall it he said that Clay Shaw was Clay Bertrand.
x/20 about 3/1/67, outside his information hearing. Technically he
was not yet A.G.

the publicity and took to the limelight in a media blitz.
He repeatedly asserted in forums all over the country that
there would be more arrests and that he was confident of
convictions. Playboy lent its pages for a full-length inter-
view, and Garrison was invited to appear on the Johnny
Carson Show. Suddenly, the New Orleans prosecutor was a hot
property everywhere.

As Garrison talked, the world--and Clay Shaw--waited.
This time, the wait would be a long one.

A/8 One of the most curious incidents attendant to Shaw's
arrest occurred shortly afterward in Washington. Attorney
General Ramsey Clark announced out of the blue that the FBI
had investigated Shaw in the immediate wake of the assassi-
nation and found nothing to pursue. By the FBI's lights,
Clark said, Clay Shaw was clean. Then, after demands from
the press to explain why the FBI had investigated Shaw,
Ramsey Clark retreated from his earlier position and said
that actually there had not been an FBI investigation. This
was preposterous in light of the Attorney General's earlier
specific statement. The press was not satisfied.

As if this were not confusing enough, a Justice Depart-
ment official again tried to explain the Attorney General's
curious statements. The official told the New York Times
that the Justice Department "was convinced that Clay Shaw
and Clay Bertrand were the same man" and that the FBI did
investigate Clay Bertrand. The official told the Times that
this probably was the source of the confusion.

He later said he had said what he had said when he said it
in 1967/ had told him. Due to
clarity & not not.

X/22

lines of the case he intended to prove against Shaw.

Shaw
Perry Raymond Russo, a neatly attired young man of 25 who worked as an insurance salesman in Baton Rouge, told the ^{Panel of Judges} ~~hearing~~ of his friendship with David Ferrie during the early Sixties. He swore that in September of 1963 he attended a party at Ferrie's home that included an older man called "Clem Bertrand" and Ferrie's roommate, a young man with a scraggly beard named "Leon Oswald." Russo, a graduate of ~~Loyola~~ University, testified that he believed the two were Clay Shaw and Lee Harvey Oswald.

Russo specifically swore that he heard the two men discussing with Ferrie the details of an assassination plot. He heard them use such terms as "diversionary tactics" and "triangulation of crossfire." Russo said that he had never told anyone about his knowledge of the plot until he came forward after hearing about Garrison's investigation.

A second witness, a heroin addict, was used as a back-up to link Shaw and Oswald. He testified that one day in 1963 while he was administering drugs to himself at the lakefront, he observed Shaw and Oswald together talking. He said that he watched Shaw give some money to Oswald. He could not, he said, hear what they were talking about.

Based on these witnesses and on Garrison's presentation, the judges ruled that there was sufficient evidence for a trial.

A/9 James Phelan, a journalist who was to become signifi-

and Shaw's defense



X/23



cantly involved in the Garrison case, has described in his book, Scandals, Scamps and Scoundrels, what happened next:

"In the public's mind, the judicial ruling...was a clear-cut victory for Garrison and gave an aura of substance to his conspiracy solution....No one but Garrison and a few of his top aides knew that he had played all of his evidentiary hole cards. He implied there was much more to come, and then set out to discover what it was....

"The preliminary hearing victory made him a national media celebrity, and while his staff was energetically seeking new evidence, (Garrison) embarked on a long series of speeches, talk-show appearances, television, radio and magazine interviews. He had a seemingly endless supply of 'new disclosures,' all revealed with the...confidence of a man who knew exactly what he was doing."

g?
It seems inevitable that in the media circus that followed, Garrison's claims became increasingly far-flung in terms of the elements he believed to be involved and the people he was determined to bring to justice. As the months went by, Garrison came up with allusions to dozens of conspirators and numerous theories, including one in which the real killer ^{concealed himself in} ~~jumped out of~~ a manhole in Dealey Plaza, fired a shot into the President's head, and then escaped through the sewer system. However, in nearly every case, some sort of obscure evidence could be found to support even Garrison's most outlandish assertions. In the end, Garrison settled on a villain that he was ~~finally~~ comfortable with.

told Phelan that he was going to show him "something no one knows about but my top people." According to Phelan, Garrison handed him a packet of documents and stated:

"I've got the witness who ties this whole case together. He's my case against Shaw. Here's the evidence my witness is going to present in the Shaw hearing next week."

Back at his hotel Phelan read the papers. There were two documents--one a 3,500-word memorandum of an interview of Perry Russo conducted by Andrew (Moo Moo) Sciambra, a former boxer and one of Garrison's top assistants. (Russo, of course, was to become Garrison's star witness against Shaw.) That interview took place on February 25th, after Russo read of Ferrie's death and contacted Garrison's office. The second document in Phelan's hands was a stenographic record of what Russo had said several days later when placed under hypnosis.

States James Phelan:

"I read the documents with a deepening sense of horror and disbelief. Russo had told two different stories a few days apart. On the essential issue--the Ferrie, Shaw, Oswald plot to kill Kennedy--they contradicted each other."

The essential point was that in Sciambra's memo of his first interview with Russo, there was not a word about the party where Shaw, Ferrie and Oswald were supposed to be hatching a plot to kill the President. It was a crucial omission, for that gathering represented the sum of Garrison's evidence tying Shaw to a conspiracy. The conspiracy

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X/29

evidence as people from around the country poured into his office and blitzed his telephone with claims to strengthen his case against Shaw. Most of the claims, it is now known, were wildly absurd. Still, Garrison had his pick to use as he saw best.

This whole period was punctuated by intense national publicity through which Garrison sought to force certain prospective witnesses to New Orleans to give evidence. He tried to summon federal officials and top officers from the Central Intelligence Agency. By this time, Garrison was claiming that Shaw had in fact been an agent of the CIA--an allegation that turned out to have some merit, though of dubious relevance to the case as charged. It is not surprising that there was a general reluctance among federal agencies to cooperate.

Garrison soon moved beyond his assertions that the CIA had murdered JFK to claim evidence that federal agencies were deliberately executing elaborate machinations to undermine his case. They intended, he said, to abort the emergence of "truth." In the end, some evidence of this was indicated. The reasons, however, may have been more in reaction to Garrison's tactics than anything else. In any event, Garrison had managed to alienate himself and the Shaw case from nearly every ^(level of government) ~~traditional~~ agency of jurisprudence in the United States.

On January 21, 1969, almost two years after Shaw's arrest, his conspiracy trial opened in New Orleans. The

more than
2 FBI agents
and Allen
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Can you
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stances?

X/30

selection of a jury was predictably difficult in a case of such notoriety. The very first prospective juror examined -- a man whose name had been drawn blindly in open court--was promptly excused. His name: John Kennedy.

After nearly 1,200 prospects were examined, the jury was finally seated. Judge Edward A. Haggerty, Jr., suggested to the press that the jurors could be photographed later at their motel, only after putting on shirts and ties. "I don't want them looking like the Scopes trial," Judge Haggerty explained. He then announced that he intended to recess court each day by 5:30 p.m. "so we can catch Huntley-Brinkley and Cronkite (to) see what they say about us." These admonishments from the judge largely set the tone for the rest of the trial, which lasted thirty-five days and was one of the ^{best} ~~most well~~-publicized in American history.

AA/12 Perry Russo remained Garrison's star witness, his strongest card for showing that Shaw, Ferrie and Oswald engaged in a conspiracy to assassinate the President. However, Russo's claims were devastated by the testimony of James Phelan, the reporter. Even worse for Garrison, the defense presented a veteran New Orleans police officer--a lieutenant in the homicide division--who testified that Perry Russo told him that, in truth, Shaw was not the man he saw at Ferrie's apartment that night in 1963.*

*(FN: The one likely explanation of Russo's erratic testimony is, as he told several people privately, that he never dreamed that he was the only witness Garrison had to

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practically unheard of, raising the serious constitutional question of double jeopardy. Still, Shaw would not be goaded into making a negative comment about Garrison. Five years later, his legal entanglements with Garrison still in the courts, Clay Shaw died of a brain tumor. He was 5__.

FXI did not for use: Shaw did lie in the alibi you refer to, and I have always wondered why. When I learned for the first time on/so what Garrison's case was I told them that they would lose the case and deserved to, and I was never in the courtroom and left without ~~the~~ taking in the trial. But there is no doubt at all: Shaw lied for a Clinton alibi. Garrison could have proven that he lied & he just did not try, which I find strangest of all.

X/41

Garrison seemed obsessed with the destruction of Clay Shaw.

*what
attention
other than
conjecture
or myth?*

This international vilification never seemed to bother Jim Garrison nor, for that matter, the voters of New Orleans. Considering the attention Garrison had directed away from his reported friend Carlos Marcello, it is not surprising that he continued to ^{co-exist peacefully with} ~~enjoy support from~~ organized crime. Garrison was handily reelected to his office in 19__, and it is even possible that he was helped locally by the publicity he received over the Shaw trial. ^{In 19-} ~~Since then,~~ he ~~has~~ lost a bid for reelection.

In 1971, Garrison experienced legal difficulties over federal bribery and conspiracy charges and has faced a morals charge involving a minor boy. Garrison was acquitted of all charges--including an allegation that he accepted \$50,000 a year in payoffs to allow illegal gambling operations--and rather proudly wears these incidents as scars of his battles with the powers that be. Today, he serves as an appeals judge, an elected office in New Orleans.

In 1981, Garrison reaffirmed to the author his belief that he conducted a just prosecution of Clay Shaw. He reiterated his feeling that the United States government has purposefully allowed the JFK case to go unsolved. Says Garrison: "The frustrating thing is that really there is no mystery about it at all." With that statement, Garrison is launched into a harangue about the military-industrial-intelligence complex and how, he believes surely, it somehow carried off the assassination of President Kennedy.

The word "agent" that JG was is tricky with Mr. C. H.
and Full I doubt that Shaw was an "agent"

X/42

None of this, however, goes to the heart of Garrison's prosecution of Clay Shaw. In discussing that case, still with considerable enthusiasm, Garrison points not to specific evidence that he found particularly persuasive against Shaw. Rather, he speaks of the much grander schemes to which he alluded in his closing statement at the trial. He mentions the witnesses he did not present--and from there he proceeds to explain his reasons for being certain he does know who killed JFK. He speaks of Clay Shaw's connections with groups that may have had ties to the CIA. He cites his evidence that Shaw was an agent for the CIA. He states his firm belief that Shaw did know Ferrie and that the two of them associated with Oswald. He speaks of his certainty that Shaw used the alias Clay Bertrand. Garrison's fervor for his case has not diminished.

A/17 The fundamental trouble with most of what Garrison says on this point is the fact it has absolutely nothing to do with the specific conspiracy charge of which Clay Shaw was acquitted. Lee Oswald associated fleetingly with hundreds of people during his short adulthood, and so far not a single one has been shown to have conspired with him to assassinate President Kennedy. It is worth keeping in mind that Shaw could have known Ferrie--and even Oswald, ^{but} ~~and~~ that alone would not prove that he conspired with them to kill President Kennedy. It could even be established that Shaw is the elusive Clay Bertrand, and that would not prove anything beyond his having a secret life and associations with dub-

Good and
important
to say

Did he really get This rich?

X/46

(ITM), an organization aimed at the development of international trade relations, particularly for the Port of New Orleans. In the course of things, Shaw became a millionaire through his private business dealings, particularly in real estate.

Shaw seems to have done a masterful job for his employers, blending his work as a promoter into his personal life as a writer and a patron of the arts. He was at ease in the cultivated social and artistic life of New Orleans and counted among his close friends the most prominent men and women of the city. Stories are told of Shaw's generosity toward friends and his willingness to make sacrifices for others.

Shaw's homosexuality was not an open matter, but rather an aspect of his life that seems not to have interested the people who were known as his friends and business associates. Even in New Orleans, during those years, it is unlikely that flagrant homosexuality would have been acceptable on the part of a man in Shaw's position. He was, after all, a leading promoter of New Orleans to the outside world. It is not surprising that Shaw's private sex life--as the sex life of any respectable person--was not a subject of common knowledge or discussion.

Nor should it be surprising that, indeed, ^{here} ~~there~~ was a darker side to Shaw's life that he did not flaunt. Given what is known of Hoover's FBI during those years, it is

Shaw not
flagrant, it
was well
known
going back to
his youth

X/47

fairly predictable that the sex life of a man of Shaw's stature would certainly come under official scrutiny. As early as 1954, the FBI recorded in its files the report of a New Orleans informant who stated that he "had relations of a homosexual nature with Clay Shaw." The FBI report then notes the informant's report that Shaw is "given to sadism and masochism in his homosexual activities."

I think he would have detected Ferrie. Do you mean this conjecture?

In view of this--as well as other unseemly evidence of a similar nature turned up by Garrison's men--it is not particularly outlandish that Shaw might have engaged in a sexual association with David Ferrie. By the same token, he could have been associated with a whole network of homosexual activity that existed in New Orleans' French Quarter where Shaw lived. It could, indeed, be that Shaw, in a fairly discreet manner, maintained sexual relationships that he very much wanted to conceal--relationships having absolutely nothing to do with a conspiracy to assassinate the President. However, the mere act of concealment--particularly if he falsely denied it in court--could be sufficient to stimulate dark suspicions. Such a hypothesis is enhanced by the fact that Shaw was apparently enormously upset by the suggestions of his homosexuality that were bandied about during his two-year nightmare.

A/19 In 1977, a CIA document was disclosed that confirmed that Shaw had a ~~Clay Shaw's~~ relationship with the CIA. The information was contained in a 1967 report prepared by the CIA in response

X/49

no - only air support
which he had ~~always~~ refused.

of Pigs invasion.*

*7-11-63
could have
sent to me
A.S. Munn*

*(FN: Today it is known that Cabell and his ^{associates} ~~henchmen~~ ^{vehement} ~~vicious~~ were in their rage toward what they perceived as President Kennedy's "desertion" on the morning of the invasion--the President's refusal to send in military force sufficient to insure victory. The dispute was so intense that President Kennedy was moved to make his famous comment about wanting to "smash the intelligence agencies into a million pieces" over his belief that they had so badly misinformed him about their invasion plans.)

But General Cabell, who later was ^{replaced} ~~fired~~ by President Kennedy, did not use the New Orleans occasion to castigate the President. (Instead, he spoke about how the Soviet system had applied science to further its ideological goals.) ~~1961~~ The point here is that the selection of Clay Shaw to introduce General Cabell, the second highest figure at the CIA, clearly suggests that--in the absence of any record of Shaw's continuing reports to the CIA after 1956--Shaw evidently continued to enjoy a good relationship with the Agency.*

*(FN: It is one of history's odd coincidences that General Cabell's brother, Earle, was the mayor of Dallas in November of 1963. He was riding in the the motorcade several cars back from the President when Kennedy was struck by bullets.)

(One-line Space)

X/52

Are you sure that Ferrie was still officially in CAP at that time? I have a file on this. Ferrie was out of CAP for a while.

But David Ferrie's most important connection was the one that he denied until his death--his association with Oswald. That link, it is now clear, was solid. In addition to the sighting at Clinton, Louisiana, in 1963, Oswald as a teenager belonged to Ferrie's unit of the Civil Air Patrol in New Orleans. Today, there are additional eye-witness reports that verify the association.

They would have ignored who he was, who he knew, to speak to him

Despite Ferrie's denial that he knew Oswald, he was plagued with the accusation from the first hours of Oswald's notoriety. Even in 1963, the circumstantial evidence against Ferrie was so substantial that he was one of the earliest suspects questioned and released by the FBI. It is worth considering those events --not because they prove anything, but because of the light that is shed on this strange man. At the most benign, Ferrie had a remarkable penchant for making himself appear to be involved even if he was not.

The fall of 1963 found David W. Ferrie heavily occupied with his work on the deportation case involving New Orleans Mafia boss Carlos Marcello. Ferrie was employed as an investigator by Marcello's lawyer. During the two weekends prior to the JFK assassination in November, Ferrie was at Churchill Farms, Marcello's 3,000-acre estate just outside of New Orleans. Ferrie was supposedly at Marcello's home to participate in strategy sessions for the trial.

That trial ended on November 22, 1963, in a federal

X/53

courtroom at New Orleans when Marcello was acquitted. Ferrie was last seen by a reliable witness around midday that Friday, almost at the time word was received that Kennedy had been shot in Dallas. Such a perfectly packaged alibi, it seems, was all too neat for the daring pilot with the orange monkey hair.

Around six-thirty that evening, Ferrie set off on a trip to Texas. He later explained that he wanted to relax after the trial's conclusion, claiming he first decided to depart New Orleans without firm plans, not really knowing if he was going off "hunting, drinking or driving." This whim took Ferrie and two young male friends on a ____-hour drive through one of the worst storms of the year, from New Orleans to Houston, Texas, a distance of ____ miles.

The sole purpose of this trip, according to Ferrie's ^{contradictory} later statements, was to look over an ice rink and to do some ice skating.

When he reached Houston at four-thirty the next morning, Ferrie and ^{his youthful companions} ~~the two boys~~ checked into a motel. Telephone records show that while at the motel, Ferrie made three telephone calls to New Orleans--two of them seemingly innocuous.

One of the calls, however, was to the headquarters of Carlos Marcello. The purpose of that call, Ferrie claimed, was an attempt to locate the lawyer for whom he worked, ~~though there is no record showing that Ferrie tried to make a direct call to the lawyer's home or office.~~

his
motel. Do
not know
what he
did with
motel by
Ferrie, Beane
another
motel. I
think the
motel was
in the
hunting
and
way
11/11/64
left early
message
to him
20 4 11/11
11/11/64
old.

X/56

This apparently was not true. It was also alleged that Ferrie had taught Oswald how to shoot with a telescopic lens back when Oswald was a cadet in Ferrie's unit of the Civil Air Patrol.

Ferrie denied, of course, that he had ever even met Oswald. He was quickly sent on his way by the FBI. It was not until nearly four years later that Garrison's office resurrected the whole matter of Ferrie's possible connection to the assassination.

What, though, could Ferrie have been doing at the ice-skating rink in Houston?

A/22 Garrison's theory was that Ferrie's role was that of a backup get-away pilot--one whose job it was to be on hand in Houston to fly certain conspirators out of the country in the event that a primary plan failed. This, of course, is pure speculation, a grasping to fathom what the truth was in the wild ____-mile trip through the rain to wait by a telephone in an ice-skating rink.

7/3/68
Despite intense efforts by Garrison to develop evidence about Ferrie's reasons for such behavior, it remains a mystery. No practical evidence has emerged to suggest that Ferrie was involved in any flying activities during his peculiar weekend. No waiting plane was ever located in Houston. Nor was there the slightest indication that the young men with Ferrie--one of them a high school student--knew what was going on, or knew the names of the people Ferrie was talking to on the telephone.

X/62

19__ when Director Hoover elevated him to the top position as agent in charge of the Bureau's Chicago office, one of the most important in the country. After his retirement, Banister was appointed by the mayor of New Orleans to be that city's deputy chief of police. Banister took with him to New Orleans not only his impressive FBI career but also a background in military intelligence with origins reaching to his distinguished service during World War Two. On paper, Guy Banister was ^{EMINENTLY} ~~imminently~~ qualified for service in New Orleans--whether it be in law enforcement, intelligence work, private investigation or plain old-fashioned rabble-rousing.*

*(FN: The House Select Committee on Assassinations determined that, in September of 1960, the CIA considered using Banister "for the collection of foreign intelligence but ultimately decided against it." Again, one is drawn to the authoritative comments cited earlier that indicate there might be no records of ^a ~~any~~ covert relationship between the CIA and an agent.)

But Banister's bloom soon faded in New Orleans. He went into a bilious rage at a waiter in a Bourbon Street bar and pulled his gun--actually throwing it at the young man, according to one report. There was publicity. Banister was fired by the police department, an event that must have added angst to an already embittered and dyspeptic psyche. It is not surprising that almost at once he formed something called Guy Banister Associates, a loosely organized private detective agency dedicated to the zealous pursuit of Ban-

he had
left the
FBI with
irreversible
brain
damage,
according to
Aaron
Hobbs

X/64

blocks of the local headquarters of the CIA and the FBI.

Various government organizations kept their fleets of automobiles less than a block from Banister at the Crescent City Garage. The U.S. Post Office was close by, which reportedly *across street* housed drop sites for various agents.

Given the presence of such facilities, it is far from surprising that the CIA-sponsored Cuban Revolutionary Council (CRC), the foremost of the exile groups, took office space in Banister's building. The owner of the shabby old building, one Samuel Newman, has stated that his tenant Banister urged him to lease space to the Cuban exiles. Headed by Sergio Archacha Smith, the CRC was an umbrella group that sought to coordinate diverse exile activities. It was recognized as the CIA's primary front organization for intelligence and military activities against Cuba. *At a glance,* ~~From a~~ distance, though, one would never suspect that the CRC had its headquarters in Banister's building, for the address he used was 531 Lafayette Street. The address for the Cuban Revolutionary Council was 544 Camp Street. They were, of course, one and the same.

5
to you say who put this in I do not recall this you did. also CIA with- drew support of CRC before L.H. went to N.O.
~~Less than one block from Banister's office was the William B. Reilly Coffee Company, makers of Luzianne coffee. Only the most convoluted theories include the Reilly company as a player in the possibly sinister New Orleans connections. However, during that period the coffee company had among its employees one young man who, indeed, would become the prime~~

Roberts is at best dubious. She did not tell these things to earlier interviews, including Garrison

X/66

Extraordinary testimony comes from Delphine Roberts, Banister's secretary and confidante for many years. She told the House Assassinations Committee that she saw Oswald on numerous occasions in Banister's office and even in Banister's presence during the summer of 1963. Her belief is that Oswald worked for Banister.

A/26 Prior to Mrs. Roberts' appearance before the Assassinations Committee in 1979, she was interviewed by author Anthony Summers, to whom she first made her public statements about what she had seen as Guy Banister's personal secretary. According to Summers, Mrs. Roberts at first refused to talk to him and then denied knowing anything about Oswald until after the assassination. However, Summers says that "after an upsetting confrontation with her own lawyer," Delphine Roberts began to relate what she remembered in vivid detail. In 1982, Mrs. Roberts told this author that Summers' published account was accurate. Mrs. Roberts' reason for talking was that she believed her information paralleled so much material on Oswald's true activities in New Orleans that has emerged in recent years. She believed that what she was saying only confirmed the facts that had emerged.

Mrs. Roberts, who is as stridently right-wing as the late Guy Banister (who died of a heart attack in June of 1964), claims that Oswald actually associated with Banister's office and carried on activities for Banister. She states that Oswald had a small room situated above Banis-

X/67 It was not small. It was #5, consisting of 2 connecting, good-sized rooms, and it had been CRC's. Banister's full door gave access to the last floor corridor & the stairs & that is all. She could tell Summers such things because the building had been torn down.

ter's Lafayette Street operation--one that could be reached either through Banister's office or by the entrance from 544 Camp Street--and that this room was filled with placards and literature connected with the pro-Castro Fair Play for Cuba Committee (FPCC). This, of course, was the group which Lee Oswald so oddly and ostentatiously represented, alone, in New Orleans.

Moreover, Delphine Roberts' most striking claims are that she saw Oswald and Banister together on numerous occasions in the office. The two men were, she says, clearly in cahoots. She recalls that it was only under certain circumstances that Banister expressed any venomous feelings about the pro-Castro material housed in his office. That happened on several occasions when someone brought the material down from Oswald's cubicle into Banister's area. It was only then that Banister would object to its display in his own personal office. He did not object to its being in Oswald's area.

In addition to Mrs. Roberts' startling account, there was confirmation of sorts from Allen and Daniel Campbell, young men who were working on Cuban matters for Banister in 1963. In separate ways, they both recalled Oswald's association with Banister.

The culmination of these strange carryings-on seems to have come on August 9, 1963, when Lee Oswald was jailed as a result of his pro-Castro activities. Viewed from any perspective, the event resists coming into clear focus.

x/71

I believe it refused to give me a copy with the
544 address & that the WC had to get one from the Secret
Service

presence of the stamped address 544 Camp Street. An understanding of this could help unravel the persistent mystery of Oswald's strange activities in New Orleans. The foundation for such an understanding, of course, lies in grasping Oswald's association with Guy Banister and David Ferrie.

A/28

(One-line Space)

It was soon after Oswald's arrest in August that the shadow of 544 Camp Street was cast over Clinton, Louisiana. That is the little town 130 miles _____ of New Orleans where numerous credible witnesses saw Oswald with David Ferrie and a man who, as discussed earlier, was probably Guy Banister. Piecing together the accounts of the various Clinton witnesses, it appears that Oswald was going through the motions of seeking employment in the area or at least trying to register to vote. The efforts of Oswald and his cohorts that day were remarkably persistent considering the absence of any conceivable reason why Oswald would want to vote or work in an unfamiliar town 130 miles from New Orleans. However, the time of this sighting by the Clinton witnesses does coincide with a time period--August 21st until September 17th--when Oswald's whereabouts have never been established, despite intense efforts to do so by researchers as well as federal investigators.

What, then, could have been the purpose of the visit to

more n
less
north

why not
would if
he needed
a job. The
how could he
register
with no
home
address?

not by
machine?

X/73

been. However, proof of Oswald's manipulation in this fashion would open new doors in all directions, particularly in terms of Oswald's associations.

In Conspiracy, Anthony Summers reasons that such an effort could have been connected to the FBI's COINTELPRO exercise, a massive domestic spying operation going on during the Sixties that was not exposed until 19___. If true, that would involve the FBI--with its ex-agent Banister at the controls--in an effort to smear CORE with a purported pro-Communist like Oswald. There is nothing far-fetched about this scenario. Indeed, it represents a thoroughly rational--if speculative--explanation for the presence of Oswald, Banister and Ferrie in Clinton.

If this is so, then where does it leave Oswald in terms of his true allegiances? In this murkiness, one can consider Oswald as either an active and cognizant agent of Banister and Ferrie or as a person who really was not aware of what purpose he was serving. In light of other known factors, it seems most reasonable that Oswald really was not certain what he was doing. Conversely, it is just as likely that Banister and Ferrie--as well as the elements for whom they were acting--knew precisely what they were doing. And the truth about that remains locked in the mysteries of 541 Camp Street.

Why would
the FBI run
this sort of
unnecessary
risk? If all
@ kept staff
in control

Does
neither
Oswald nor
Banister have
a personal
or strong
beliefs?
Please think
seriously of
restricting
self to just my
hunches
while avoiding
ending my
hunches

By this time the FBI had the order to turn Klein's records

X/77

sinister about it--was to remove or destroy evidence. Far more reasonable is the speculation that the stranger may have planted something to create a link between Oswald, Klein's Sporting Goods and the Mannlicher-Carcano. During those early hours, it was not clear that the evidence available in Dallas would be sufficiently solid in placing the weapon in Oswald's hands. Indeed, the only print from Oswald to be found on the rifle was not discovered until several days later--after Oswald's death and after the rifle was returned to Dallas from the FBI Laboratory in Washington. Discovery of the print at that late date raised suspicions in the minds of some Warren Commission members, as examined in Chapter VI.

In any event, no one has ever determined the identity of the stranger who arrived so promptly to inspect the magazines at the Crescent City Garage. It would have been simple enough for the Warren Commission, in its deposition of Adrian Alba, to ask him about the person who had claimed to be one of his "very best friends." There was, after all, a precise description of the stranger provided by Alba's employee. However, the Warren Commission never asked the question.

Critic Paul Hoch, who has made a careful if inconclusive study of this question, points out that in the end, FBI Laboratory examination of the June, 1963, issue of the American Rifleman found in Alba's garage yielded Oswald's

X/78

What did he need or want it for? Didn't Klein ship to Dallas earlier than LHO in MO?

thumb print. That same magazine had a Klein's ad coupon torn from it --a coupon that was found in Oswald's possessions in Dallas.

All of this doubtlessly would have constituted prime evidence except that records produced by Klein's a few days *not so immediately* later showed that actually Oswald ordered his rifle from the February issue of American Rifleman. With that powerful discovery in the Klein's records, interest in the solid evidence found in the June issue of the magazine evaporated. However, the convenience and coincidence present in this development of evidence is so striking that, to observers seasoned by other FBI fact-fiddling, it is almost suspect.

Given the astounding neatness with which a print could suddenly appear on the Mannlicher-Carcano in the frenzy of the Dallas investigation, an observer feels a certain ~~dubious~~ ^{doubt} ~~ness~~ about the fortuity of the emergence of the New Orleans rifle evidence. The implication, of course, is that at the earliest hours--even in New Orleans--evidence was being manipulated to seal the case against Oswald. In this instance, ultimately, the evidence was not needed. At the very least, however, it is unfortunate that the Warren Commission did not inquire about the identity of the stranger, for it could have yielded additional light on the goings-on in New Orleans. Twenty years later, Adrian Alba was asked about his "very best friend," the stranger. He told the author:

X/81

believed he was working as an investigator or informant for a Senate subcommittee accumulating evidence of the shocking ease with which weapons could be ^{ordered} ~~purchased~~ through the mails. Under this theory, the two weapons Oswald actually ordered by mail before leaving Dallas in April would have been a part of this activity which he continued once he reached New Orleans. *

incredible!

In January of 1963, hearings began in Washington before the Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee ^{On Juvenile Delinquency} ~~To Investigate the Interstate Traffic in Mail Order Firearms~~. These hearings continued for more than three months under the leadership of Senator Thomas J. Dodd. The proceedings came to be known as the Dodd Committee. Evidence was amassed to show that there was practically no control over the sale of firearms through the mails--sales that potentially could reach, in addition to children, the most maladjusted, criminal and even crazed segments of American society.

A/32 Part of the effort of the Dodd Committee was to show that absolutely anyone with a few dollars could successfully order weapons through the mails. This potentially dangerous reservoir of American residents included, as Oswald so conveniently demonstrated, an ex-Marine who had once defected to the Soviet Union and, even after his re-^{had} turn, participated in pro-Castro (Communist) activities and had been jailed for engaging in a street fight. Whether or not Oswald was a part of the Dodd Committee, ^{efforts,} he certainly

* FN: (Most of the work on this theory has been done by Fred Newcomb, an assassination researcher who made available a portion of his

and of which it had countless illustrations without him.

X/82

served perfectly to illustrate the point that the Committee was trying to make.

~~Two of~~ the major gun houses under investigation by the Dodd Committee in 1963 ^(included) ~~were Klein's Sporting Goods and Seaport Traders of California. They were the two companies~~ ^{It was that company} from which Oswald was officially determined to have ordered ^{the pistol supposedly used in the Tippit murder.} ~~his rifle and pistol.~~ ^(the rifle as well as the pistol) Inasmuch as Oswald ordered ~~the guns~~ under a false name, the point was demonstrated that there was virtually no control over even that aspect of mail order guns. Months after those orders were filled, following the assassination, police found in Oswald's possessions five blank mail order coupons as well as some complete gun ads. Of the blank coupons, three were for Klein's ^{Sporting Goods} and ^{one} for Seaport Traders.

Despite all of Oswald's eccentricities, most students of his life agree that in nearly everything he did, there was a purpose. His purpose in accumulating mail order coupons for guns has never been clear--any more so than Oswald's reason for questioning Adrian Alba about ordering guns through the mail months after Oswald had already done so.

It is established that the Dodd Committee did hire people around the country to assist in their efforts to assess the areas of their interest. One of the young investigators--after getting into trouble on the Mexican border with the police over his fight with a call girl--was

X/83

subsequently discovered by authorities trying to check two Thompson machine guns and 5,000 rounds of ammunition ~~pistols~~ through to Hyannisport, Massachusetts, while President Kennedy was visiting there. Finally, the young investigator was let go after, according to one account, he "seized a Navy flare gun from the subcommittee's exhibits and brandished it menacingly during a temper tantrum."

But was
he on payroll,
if public
enemy in
suits?

was
illegally
into & pay
in not
same

With an investigator like that on the payroll, it is difficult to argue that Lee Oswald would not have been suitable for the role. Not only did Oswald have a dishonorable discharge from the Marines, he had gained notoriety by defecting to the Soviet Union. Back in New Orleans, he ostensibly continued his pro-Communist activities while also involving himself with anti-Communist fanatics and right-wing nuts. Certainly, a record like Oswald's would lend itself effectively to the Dodd Committee's efforts to show that anyone--regardless of their background and current activities--could order guns through the mails.

There has never been a known official inquiry into these possibilities. Twenty years after the facts, _____, formerly the _____ of the Dodd Committee, dismissed the possibility as ludicrous, stating:

_____.

While this response is far from conclusive, it does show the intensity of rejection of this particular possibility. However, it does not in any sense account for mat-

X/84

ters if, in reality, Lee Harvey Oswald believed, even wrongly, that he was working for this Congressional subcommittee. If Oswald believed this, for whatever reason, then his actions are better understood. The implications, however, point in only one sinister direction--conspiracy and manipulation.

What basis could he possibly have for believing this?

X/88

highly memorable visit with a man who would surely not forget it. It was quite like his calling in the FBI to inform agents about his Fair Play for Cuba activities. The books checked out of the local library tend to support the whole story. What becomes clear is that in Judge Gillin's report, there is solid evidence of yet another example of Oswald's flagrant posturing. He had managed to link himself firmly with a pro-Castro, pro-Communist cause. He was also associated with right-wing fanatics like Banister and Ferrie. In the case of the Gillin visit, he was painting himself as a man possibly hooked on some heavy, mind-altering drugs. In fact, the only rational way the incident makes any sense is as another example of his posturing for the sake of creating an image. For what purpose is as mysterious as ever.

(One-line Space)

Repeatedly, the pieces of evidence in this case, taken alone, seem very solid. When, however, an effort is made to fit them into a pattern, they spell contradiction and confusion. What does one make, for example, of the tantalizing fact that in 1960--more than ^{three} ~~two~~ years before the assassination--"FBI Director Hoover" informed the State Department that an imposter [~~in New Orleans~~] might be posing as Lee Harvey Oswald, then a defector to the Soviet Union? ~~Hoover express~~

was it
this or that LHO's
into conf. note, etc.
could be used by a
possible imposter?

My recollection is that it was not like this but that the
FBI's concern was the possible mis use of any
documentation by the K & B. Their interest was not in LHO per se

x/89

~~and concern over evidence that someone seemed to have been
using Oswald's identification papers, including his birth
certificate which the FBI believed Oswald had taken with him
to the Soviet Union.~~

~~To fan these flames of suspicion, somehow Hoover's memo
to the State Department was withheld from materials turned
over to the Warren Commission. It did not come to light
until 1975 when a private researcher discovered it in the
National Archives.~~ There is no question about the validity
of the Hoover memo on Oswald, leading one to grasp futilely
for reasons why the FBI would show such an interest in
Oswald in 1960, ~~and then appear to conceal it from the Warren
Commission in 1964.~~ One thing it clearly provides is a
springboard for speculation.

The same is true as concerns the weird circumstances of
Oswald's post office box in New Orleans. Two weeks after he
had left that city in September, 1963, someone signed his
name on a postal form and closed out his box. Who could have
done this? Why was it done? The questions are merely typical
of those that weave the fabric of the entire mystery.

A/35 Enormous attention has been given to the possibility
that Lee Oswald, while in New Orleans, had some sort of
informant relationship with a federal agency—either a known
agency such as the FBI or some secret U.S. intelligence
organization that to this day has not been revealed. Stri-
dent denials by officials must be considered in light of the

X/90

obvious fact that if an intelligence entity is unknown to the public, then its principals cannot be examined for the record. If, to fabricate an example, Oswald had been working for some branch of U.S. intelligence unknown to the public called the Zombie Zoos, officials could have testified just as they have and have told the truth. Thus, there would be no revelation that Oswald was working for some branch of U.S. intelligence. There have been, of course, absolute denials by the FBI and the CIA that Oswald had any relationship with either of those agencies. However, there have not been--and cannot be--denials from elements that have never been asked about Oswald because investigators and researchers never knew the organizations existed. As convoluted as this reasoning may seem, it is nourished by the frustrations felt by researchers who are certain, given the whole sweep of Oswald's activities, that he must have been working for someone. ^{even a state or local agency} (See Chapter Nine for a full discussion of this point.)

In New Orleans, the most frenzied attention has been given to a possible relationship between Oswald and the FBI. That speculation has been fueled by a variety of factors--such as the 1960 Hoover memo--which are largely responsible for the persistence of the allegations. ^{Finally,} ~~In the end,~~ while ^{proliferate into,} ~~there are seemingly endless~~ loose ends ~~and~~ contradictions, there is no solid evidence that Oswald had a direct relationship of any sort with the FBI in New Orleans.

X/91

By the same token, there is little or no evidence to diminish the possibility that Oswald might have served as a "cut-out"--as a functionary operating in some capacity once-removed from an official connection. Such a function might attach to the Guy Banister operation or to any work he was doing for the Dodd Committee.

Still, there is a wide belief among critics that Oswald did have a relationship ^(--even an indirect one--) with the FBI in New Orleans. Most of the allegations of a direct Oswald-FBI link in New Orleans relate to Agent Warren deBrueys, who today is the director of the Metropolitan Crime Commission of New Orleans. Orest Pena, a prominent exile associated with the CIA-sponsored Cuban Revolutionary Council, also had a relationship with deBrueys and, on occasion, provided deBrueys and the FBI with information on activities on Cuban exile activities. Pena and deBrueys are in agreement on these basic points, but the agreement stops there.

*any
unsubstantiated*
As the owner and operator of the Habana Bar, which Lee Oswald visited with a mysterious Latin, Orest Pena makes the sensational claim that on a number of occasions he observed deBrueys talking to Oswald. Pena also charges that deBrueys threatened him with physical harm if he revealed this information to the Warren Commission.

DeBrueys flatly denies both of Pena's allegations, claiming that he never met Oswald or knowingly spoke to him over the telephone. DeBrueys also refutes an additional claim by Pena that deBrueys was sent to Dallas as sort of a

handler for Oswald when Oswald returned there in early October. In truth, deBrueys asserts, he was not sent to Dallas until after the assassination and that was on a temporary basis--along with dozens of other agents from all over the United States--to assist in the Dallas investigation.

A/36 The House Assassinations Committee looked into these allegations and, in light of Pena's evasiveness on other matters, declined to embrace him as a credible witness. The Committee also found that official FBI records "served to corroborate relevant aspects of deBrueys' testimony."

Another noisome allegation that Oswald was an informant working for Agent deBrueys surfaced in 1975 when William S. Walter, who had worked as a security clerk for the FBI's New Orleans office in 1963, stepped forward to claim that he personally had seen an informant file on Oswald. He said that he was on weekend duty the day the agent was sent to interrogate Oswald in the New Orleans jail after his arrest for the street scuffle. Walter claimed that in connection with seeking information in local records on Oswald he happened to see the informant file. Walter claimed that the notations on the file, which were in a code which he knew, indicated that deBrueys was Oswald's contact within the New Orleans FBI office.

DeBrueys vehemently denies Walter's claim. The Assassinations Committee considered the whole matter and rejected

I do not remember it this way at all but have a file of what the FBI disclosed & you want to check it. It seems he was warning of a plot against JFK.

*memorandum
disparaging
can you
please give
me the
citations
the report
are not
valid & the
agent's name
is on them.*